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ABSTRACT

Arguments for and against corporal punishment are set against a backdrop of overriding public concern about school discipline. In every year since 1969, the Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup Poll has ranked lack of discipline as one of the top two problems in public schools. This report furnishes a historical perspective for corporal punishment, explains its controversial association with child abuse, presents arguments for and against the practice, and outlines student discipline alternatives. Corporal punishment has played a major role in maintaining classroom order and discipline--due to the myth of the incorrigible kid incapable of responding to other methods. Although several studies indicate a link between corporal punishment and low academic achievement, some educators claim the practice is needed to maintain an orderly learning environment. Examination of family role and connections with crime discloses largely negative findings and adverse psychological effects from corporal punishment. Moreover, certain student populations (males, blacks, and poor children) are paddled more often than others. The legal risks involving "reasonable" corporal punishment are substantial. Positive alternatives to corporal punishment are not easily come by and require sensitivity, skill, and self-control. The "Alternatives to Corporal Punishment Report" classifies student misbehavior into three categories and recommended punishments. Other approaches are offered by praise and reward systems, alternative behavior centers, the Tribes program (dividing classes into "tribes" of five to seven students each to facilitate their involvement in one another's lives), and reality therapy. References and resource organizations are listed and newspaper articles provided. (MLH)

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CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

NSSC RESOURCE PAPER

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CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

An elementary school teacher in San Francisco punished students by putting them in a garbage can, covering it with rocks and boards, and threatening to smash them with a rock if they tried to get out.

A Missouri high school student was sent to the principal's office for using profanity, and the principal hit him hard enough to break the paddle. He then got another paddle to finish the job.

A geography teacher in a Houston junior high school allegedly threw a 13-year-old boy against a door and then shut the door on the boy's head, causing a knot on the head, a sore shoulder and a bruise on the chest.

Although such horror stories are the exception rather than the rule, these incidents and others like them have helped fuel a growing controversy over the use of corporal punishment in the schools.

Arguments for and against corporal punishment are set against a backdrop of overriding public concern about school discipline. In every year since 1969, when the first Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools was conducted, lack of discipline has been rated one of the top two problems in public schools.

Corporal punishment, defined as the purposeful infliction of pain to change a child's behavior or to penalize the child for a disapproved action, does not include instances where a teacher uses force to protect himself or others from physical injury, to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object, or to prevent property damage.

Paddling with a wooden instrument is the most common type of corporal punishment. However, it also includes pinching, ear-twisting, hair-pulling, knuckle-rapping, punching, shoving, and forcing students to exercise to exhaustion or to assume physically painful positions.

Schools remain the one institution where corporal punishment is allowed; law prohibits its use in mental institutions, local jails, state and federal prisons, juvenile halls, and the military.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Corporal punishment has a long history. Ancient Egyptians used the rod as a symbol for instruction; harsh physical punishment was commonplace through the medieval period. The British school

system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries used caning as a form of punishment, a practice which spread to its colonies, including America.

Until the 1970s, United States court decisions historically supported the concept of in loco parentis, which grants schools the same legal authority over students as that of a parent, as long as the schools' rules were not unreasonable, capricious arbitrary, malicious, or made in bad faith.

In the early 1970s, the case of Ingraham v. Wright led to a landmark ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that upheld the constitutionality of corporal punishment in the schools. The lawyer for the school board successfully argued that the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment applied only to prison inmates, not public school students.

The Supreme Court looked at corporal punishment again in 1974, ruling that schools could continue the practice until they thought its harm outweighed its utility, as long as the force used was reasonable.

In a 1976 ruling, the Supreme Court upheld its use once more, arguing, "In view of the low incidence of abuse, the openness of our schools and the common law safeguards that already exist, the risk of error that may result in violation of a schoolchild's substantive rights can only be regarded as minimal. Imposing additional administrative safeguards as a constitutional requirement might reduce that risk marginally, but would also entail a significant intrusion into an area of primary educational responsibility."

Although rulings throughout the 1970s upheld the schools' right to use corporal punishment, the Supreme Court did let stand a 1988 lower court ruling that gave parents the right to sue school officials for "grossly excessive" corporal punishment.

A GROWING CONTROVERSY

The Supreme Court has ruled that corporal punishment is constitutional, and 36 states allow its use. However, 14 states have chosen to abolish it. Those states, in the order that they banned corporal punishment, are: New Jersey, Massachusetts, Hawaii, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York, California, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Michigan, Virginia, North Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota. Legislation banning corporal punishment is pending in Connecticut, Oregon, Texas, Indiana, Alaska, Pennsylvania, and Illinois.

In recent years, the tragedy of child abuse has been in the national spotlight, and organizations working to abolish corporal punishment have linked their cause with that of child abuse

prevention to bring more attention to their movement.

"Just having an organization against child abuse take this kind of position [against corporal punishment] makes people say, 'Wait a minute. What's the connection here?'" said Ruth Lee of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, which has become one of the most influential national groups in the fight against paddling in schools.

However, many teachers and parents--although not a majority--still approve of corporal punishment. Only a slight majority of the American public disapproves of paddling in schools, according to a 1989 Parents magazine poll. When asked their opinion about spanking as a disciplinary method:

* 55 percent disapproved;
* 38 percent approved;
* 6 percent were not sure.

Although a majority disapprove of corporal punishment, most people say that it's effective and serves a purpose. When asked what purpose spanking serves:

* 41 percent said it's useful as a way to maintain discipline;
* 14 percent, as a way to correct a child's unacceptable behavior;
* 12 percent, for both those reasons;
* 27 percent said it wasn't useful.

When asked what makes corporal punishment effective:

* 66 percent said the shame and humiliation;
* 9 percent said the pain;
* 16 percent said it's ineffective.

A number of professional organizations oppose school spankings, including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the American Public Health Association, the Council for Exceptional Children, The National PTA, the National Association of School Psychologists, the American Bar Association, and the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers' union.

The American Federation of Teachers, on the other hand, maintains a more neutral posture. A union policy statement says, "The A.F.T. does not believe in corporal punishment," but adds that "teachers' authority to insist upon a disciplined environment should not be jeopardized by law or by school regulations."

This stand echoes the position of many teachers. According to a 1988 USA Today poll of teachers, 36 percent favor corporal punishment and 49 percent don't think it should be prohibited by law. However, few say they use it; only 11 percent say they've

paddled a student.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

"I was spanked by my teacher when I was a kid, and I turned out all right!" This is one of the most common arguments in favor of corporal punishment.

Childhood experience is the primary factor determining whether one supports or opposes corporal punishment, according to a study by the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in Schools (NCSCPAS) at Philadelphia's Temple University. Those who had been paddled as children or had seen other children paddled believed in paddling. Those who had not been paddled or had attended schools where corporal punishment was not used were opposed to the idea, according to the center's study.

This holds true for many teachers as well. "The vast majority of teachers do not receive a single course devoted to discipline in the classroom," wrote Irwin Hyman, director of NCSCPAS. "As a result, since many teachers were themselves paddled or witnessed paddling, they consider it standard operating procedure."

In 1988 the National School Safety Center brought together School of Education Deans from nine of the nation's leading teacher training institutions to discuss the training and preparation of teachers relative to effective classroom management. A major outgrowth of the conference was the recognition that the failure of teacher training institutions to include a curriculum that focuses upon creating a positive classroom environment, developing effective classroom management skills and gaining a broader social awareness of the diverse cultures students bring to the classroom. Developing these skills empowers teachers. "Failure to provide such preparation to our nation's teachers is nothing less than educational malpractice," Ronald Stephens, NSSC's Executive Director, stated.

Maintaining Order and Discipline

Advocates of school spankings often argue that corporal punishment is the only thing that works with students who ignore every other disciplinary measure. "You just don't know what you're talking about unless you've been there," one teacher said. "It is impossible to control some kids without it."

This mythology of the incorrigible kid is deeply ingrained in our cultural history, including such all-American heros as Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.

John Lofton, columnist for the Washington Times, wrote scornfully in response to those who say that a disruptive child is acting out emotional problems: "Isn't it also possible that this unruly child

may just be a disruptive little barbarian whose problem is that he is a bad kid? Isn't it possible that what's wrong with this troublemaking little thug (or big thug, for that matter) is within himself, not within his environment?"

Lofton is not the only person who believes that, without the option of paddling "bad kids," anarchy will prevail. However, schools that have eliminated corporal punishment experience relatively few discipline problems as a result, according to a report prepared for the Juvenile Welfare Board by the Youth Services Advisory Committees' Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Committee.

Furthermore, "there is evidence that suggests that in schools where corporal punishment is used, there is a higher incidence of assault on students and teachers, and a higher incidence of vandalism," says Dr. Bill Weber, a professor of education at the University of Houston-University Park.

Other experts point out that, although using corporal punishment on difficult students may relieve frustration on the teacher's part, it doesn't do what it's intended to do: make the student change his behavior.

"There is no learning from it," says child psychiatrist Dr. Jay Tarnow, director of the Houston Child Guidance Center. "They may learn in one classroom that they better control themselves because they get popped. But it doesn't get carried over to other classrooms. Then what you get is an escalation [in misbehavior and paddling]."

Adds Dr. Weber, "The question I always ask is 'If it works, why is it always the same old kids?' If it's an effective strategy, why is it always 10 percent of the kids who get 90 percent of the pops?"

"Corporal punishment helps promote lack of personal responsibility for one's behavior," says Ruth Innes, a mental health counselor specializing in adolescent psychology and the director of guidance and counseling for Shorecrest Preparatory School in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Because corporal punishment shifts the control of a student's actions to an external source--the punisher--the student can evade responsibility for improving his or her behavior, she says. The student reasons that he can do as he likes; if he gets caught, he's paddled, and, once the punishment is over and he's paid the price for his crime, he can go back to misbehaving.

If students learn anything, argue opponents of corporal punishment, it is that "might makes right" and that violence is an accepted way to resolve problems.

Effect on Academic Achievement

Several studies indicate a link between corporal punishment and low academic achievement. "Strong punishment develops anxiety, dislike for the task, and hostility toward school," writes Lee J. Cronbach in Educational Psychology.

Furthermore, evidence suggests that paddling negatively effects other children in a school, even if they don't suffer the corporal punishment themselves.

In her book Strategies for Classroom Discipline, Meryl E. Englander writes: "Once paddling starts, it escalates because the precedent and pattern is set. Everyone is aware of it and expects its use. . . Either by direct threat, subtle cues, or the fantasy of students, unless the teacher is unusual, the paddle hangs over the classroom. When used, the physical aggression of the teacher becomes a model for more acting out on the part of the students. . . [Several studies] have demonstrated that teacher punitiveness not only influences the general atmosphere of the classroom but the degree and quality of student participation in the academic program."

However, supporters of corporal punishment argue that academic achievement can only take place in an orderly environment, and that this is one of the reasons that teachers and administrators may sometimes need to resort to paddling.

When a few children disrupt a classroom, the work of other children in the class suffers as a result. "The rebellion of one person creates an atmosphere where no one learns," said one parent who headed a junior high school parents' advisory board. "I would never disagree with someone who thought corporal punishment was what my children needed as long as I knew it was administered in a controlled atmosphere."

Role of the Family

Many parents give schools permission to spank their child, a fact that is used as an argument for corporal punishment. Dennis L. Cuddy, an education consultant, former teacher, and former senior associate with the U.S. Department of Education, says that parents have a right to spank their children and that schools have a responsibility to reinforce parental authority.

He adds: "If parents who've spanked their children for serious infractions at home instruct teachers to do likewise for similar behavior at school, then for government to prohibit teachers from doing so might undermine parental authority."

However, Peter Scales, executive director of a family service center in Anchorage, writes, "Often corporal punishment is administered to children who are already having emotional and

behavioral problems. Children who are thought to need this kind of discipline probably are already in trouble at home and in school. Paddling will compound their problems."

He continues: "In systems where parental consent is required before striking a child, it's possible that consenting parents already hit their children. Such kids have a greater chance to be punished physically both at home and in school."

The National Education Association cites several studies that show that children who are spanked at home are more likely to be disruptive in school. When these children are then paddled by teachers, a vicious cycle is put into motion.

Connection with Crime

Every few months, a report on another increase in juvenile delinquency statistics seems to hit the front pages or the six o'clock news. What follows is almost as predictable: a call for the return to "old-fashioned discipline," which usually means corporal punishment. Children should be spanked when they do something bad, the reasoning goes, so that they won't turn into criminals when they grow up.

"Some advocates of 'students' rights' consider spanking barbaric," writes education consultant Cuddy. "However, it was the permissive 'students' rights' movement of the 1960s which was partly responsible for the increased chaos and student violence in schools since that time."

Others argue the reverse. Although it is difficult to prove a causal relationship between corporal punishment and juvenile delinquency, they point to figures that show that, in the sixteen states that use corporal punishment the most, the homicide rates are significantly higher than in the remaining states: 9.34 per 100,000 population versus 4.50 (1985 figures). That's an average of one-third to one-half fewer killings in states that practice less corporal punishment.

Out of 3,900 Houston residents, who were surveyed regarding the effect school corporal punishment had on their lives, 76 percent said the effects had been negative and that they continued to resent what happened to them.

"That leaves about a fourth of them who were able to shrug it off and a mere handful who felt grateful for the timely punishment that saved them from a life of crime," writes Adah Maurer and James S. Wallerstein. "Thus the ones who testify that 'I was paddled when I was a kid and it didn't hurt me. I'm not a crook,' must be labelled survivors and congratulated on the strength of character than enabled them to make a life in spite of early mistreatment. Not because of it!"

Psychological Effects

The common perception of corporal punishment is that the child suffers some momentary physical pain which quickly wears off. Some experts say that the psychological pain could be longer lasting, however.

Dr. Hyman labels this damage "Educator Induced Post-traumatic Stress Disorder," a type of psychological trauma that he says results when "trusted caregivers abuse children and are then supported by their colleagues and the community." The symptoms, he says, include nightmares, bed-wetting, personality changes, avoidance of school, some type of re-experiencing of the trauma, agressive acting out, stomachaches, and headaches.

Other people, however, point out that sensitive children who are likely to have such extreme psychological reactions to a paddling are also unlikely to cause enough trouble to receive one in the first place.

Who Gets Punished?

Other concerns over corporal punishment focus on the unequal treatment meted out to students. For example, research indicates that boys are paddled more often than girls, and primary and intermediate students receive more spankings than high school students. Special education students are the most likely candidates of all for corporal punishment.

A 1988 study by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students determined that:

* Black students were more than twice as likely as white students to be physically punished.

* Although black students make up 16 percent of the public school population nationwide, they account for 31 percent of the incidents of corporal punishment.

Many educators believe this points to a racial bias, but Dr. Hyman has another theory. "We once thought it was racial but it's not," he says. "The best predictor of who is going to get abused is socioeconomic and a greater percentage of black kids are going to be poor." He points out that poor whites are also punished more often than wealthier white students.

The Legal Risk

How does one define how much force is too much when paddling a student? How does one make sure that students' rights aren't infringed upon when deciding what disciplinary action to take?

The key to any decision regarding a contested corporal punishment

case is whether the punishment was reasonable. The standards by which reasonable corporal punishment can be judged are: the nature of the punishment; the nature of the offense; the age and physical condition of the student; the student's past conduct; and whether there was permanent injury, absence of malice, notification of the rule being enforced, the presence of a second school official, and observation of the student's procedural due process rights.

Even these guidelines are open to varying interpretations, so school districts that use corporal punishment face the possibility of lawsuits brought by angry parents or of criminal investigations conducted by police.

One recent case involved nine-year-old Teresa Garcia, who was held upside down by her ankles and given five swats with a wooden paddle. Her parents asked the principal not to spank Teresa again without their permission. A year later, Teresa came home black-and-blue from another paddling, and her father sued. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit ruled that the Garcias had the right to sue school officials for "grossly excessive" corporal punishment.

Writing about the case of Garcia V. Miera, lawyer David A. Splitt said: "If you punish a student physically, you can be sued. If you are careful enough to inflict no serious harm, you might win because the threshhold for recovery of damages remains reasonably high. But the lawsuit itself--especially if it involves appeals--will be time-consuming and expensive. In light of Garcia, you should ask yourself once again those questions about corporal punishment: Does it work? And, given the doubts about its efficacy, is it really worth it?"

Other recent examples of civil or criminal actions related to corporal punishment include the following:

* In February, 1989, police charged a Houston elementary school principal with injury to a child for the paddling he gave a 13-year-old special education student. The emotionally disturbed boy was hit about the arms, back and head after being involved in a shoving match with another student. Although the principal was not arrested, bond was set at $2,000 and he was suspended from his job.

* In 1987, a Texas school principal caught two kindergartners "snickering" in the hall and paddled each one. When they returned to the classroom, their teacher noticed that they were still giggling, took them in the hall, and spanked them again. One girl's grandmother saw the bruises and took her to a doctor, who said that the spanking had been "awful." The next day, two social workers took pictures of what they said were clearly the results of "child abuse," and the girls' families sued.

* A fifth-grade teacher in Missouri was charged with third-degree assault in connection with an alleged forceful spanking of a student. A conviction on such a charge carries a maximum sentence of a year in county jail and a $1,000 fine.

* A Pennsylvania teacher received a year's probation after being accused of throttling a 16-year-old sophomore girl in disciplinary incident.

* A Texas school district paid $10,350 to the mother of a student who was allegedly spanked illegally for failing two academic courses.

It is precisely because of the threat of lawsuits that the American Federation of Teachers does not favor laws that ban corporal punishment, says Jamie Horwitz, assistant director of public relations for the AFT. Nationally, one lawsuit is filed every week against a teacher by parents who think their child has been the victim of excessive corporal punishment.

One current case involves a teacher who, after asking a child to sit down four times, finally put her hand on the child's shoulder and gently pushed him into his seat. In another case, a chemistry teacher hit a student who was threatening to throw a liquid--which the teacher thought was sulfuric acid--into another student's face. Both teachers felt that they acted within the limits of ordinary discipline--and are now hiring lawyers to defend themselves.

"To say there will be no corporal punishment turns ordinary forms of discipline into questionable practices and could lead to even more litigation than teachers are already exposed to," Horwitz argues. "AFT certainly doesn't encourage corporal punishment, but schools are granted the rights of in loco parentis, and AFT thinks that teachers should basically have the same rights as parents while they're acting as parents in absentia."

STUDENT DISCIPLINE ALTERNATIVES

Any talk of eliminating corporal punishment prompts the question "what will be used in its place?" When the Cincinnati school district proposed a ban on paddlings, for example, the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers asked that the change be made slowly and cautiously.

"We were saying, 'we can live without corporal punishment, but you'd better be damn sure to put some alternatives in place and fund them,'" said Tom Mooney, president of the union local. "We've got an addiction in a sense to corporal punishment in this district and it's going to have to be a carefully planned withdrawal, which it hasn't been so far."

When considering suspension alternatives administrators point to the fact that, in many students' cases, both parents work. This economic reality makes meting out such punishments difficult. It becomes a larger burden on the school than on the parents or students. If a student rides the bus to school and neither parent is available to pick him up, detention poses an unfair burden since he has no way to get home. And many parents don't like the idea of suspension since they can't be at home to supervise their child.

However, many teachers and administrators are creatively exploring other disciplinary options. The prerequisite for this exploration, writes Meryl E. Englander, is the banning of corporal punishment.

"If corporal punishment is approved in a school," she writes, "the teachers are less pressed to discover alternative means for encourage appropriate behavior."

She adds a warning: "The positive alternatives are not as simple to execute as lashing out at a student. They require sensitivity, skill, and self-control. . .The teacher must not anticipate that any given strategy, no matter how expertly employed, will always achieve its objective. Particularly in the beginning, the positive alternatives will probably succeed less than half the time. So be it: few human efforts, whether they be shooting baskets, writing novels, selecting good movies, or teaching reading, have a better average."

When setting up a disciplinary code, administrators should make sure that the school's rules, in addition to conforming to state statutes and constitutional requirements, also be reasonable, clear, made in good faith, serve a public purpose, receive approval from the school district's governing body, and be disseminated to all students and their parents. The School Discipline Notebook, published by the National School Safety Center, includes a chapter on working with special education students and outlines a model code of conduct that schools may adapt to their local needs.

The Alternatives to Corporal Punishment Report

The Alternatives to Corporal Punishment Report, created by a committee of the Alabama State Department of Education, classifies misbehavior in three categories, with recommended alternative punishments as follows:

> Class I Minor Offenses: Excessive tardiness, obscene language, non-conformity to dress code, excessive disruption to other students, or minor disruption on a school bus.
>
> Recommended Punishment: Depending on the number of offenses, school official should talk with student, hold a formal

conference with parents, or assign detention, probation, or a short suspension.

Class II Intermediate Offenses: Defiance of authority, battering a student, damage to school property, trespassing, obscene gestures, or cutting classes.

Recommended Punishment: First and second offense, a conference between school officials and parents. More offenses involve detention, non-academic work assignments, and suspension.

Major offenses: Use or possession of drugs on school property, arson, battery, and carrying weapons.

Recommended Punishment: Conference with principal and voluntary withdrawal to another school, or expulsion.

Praise and Reward Systems

A "constructive discipline" program was developed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education. The technique consisted of three parts:

1) Reward good behavior with praise, recognition, prizes, and privileges.

2) Ignore minor infractions or work out deals to reward children for reducing minor misbehavior.

3) Punish only major misbehavior, such as vandalism, fighting, truancy, disruption, resisting authority, and drug use.

In one California school system, such a program cut school vandalism by 78.5 percent, and another school saved $25,000 over the previous year.

Alternative Behavior Centers

A middle school in St. Petersburg, Florida was rumored to be the worst in the county; it had the second lowest ranking in attendance and one of the highest suspension and corporal punishment rates. The principal created an Alternative Behavior Center (ABC) room to deal with unruly students. Two years later:

* the number of students sent to an administrator for disciplinary action dropped from 5,109 to 2,768;

* the number of corporal punishments dropped from 463 to one;

* the number of suspensions dropped from 354 to 142.

Students are sent to an ABC room when they break rules, show disrespect, or are consistently disruptive. The purpose of an ABC

room is to provide a nonpunitive atmosphere and reward students for changing their behavior.

Students may be assigned to the room for one class period, or for one to ten days. They complete their regular assignments and receive credit for the work they do while in the ABC room. The room isolates students from their friends and peers: short breaks are given only when other students are in class, and lunch is eaten with an ABC supervisor at a table separate from other students.

Students who behave well and complete their assignments can earn points for an early dismissal from the room--a strong incentive, since what most students dislike most about an ABC assignment is the boredom of sitting in the room away from their friends.

Tribes

The Tribes program is based on the theory that involved students cause fewer disciplinary problems. A teacher divides the class into "tribes" of five to seven students, making sure that each tribe has a mix of boys and girls, and of different personality types. The groups share personal concerns, help plan classroom discipline, and work together on academic projects.

Because rules are worked out by the tribes, rather than handed down by the teacher, they are enforced by peer pressure. Students are taught how to listen and how to avoid putting down others. The result of this supportive peer group is improved self images, increased motivation to succeed academically, and more responsible behavior.

For a copy of the teacher's manual, titled Tribes: A Process for Peer Involvement, write to the Center for Human Development (listed under Resources).

Reality Therapy

Developed by Dr. William Glasser, reality therapy attempts to teach students how to take more responsibility for their lives, while correcting the tendency for teachers or counselors to deepen students' feelings of helplessness, inadequacy, and depression by being too sympathetic to their problems.

Since 1968, the Educator Training Center, a division of the Institute for Reality Therapy, has trained almost 100,000 educators in the application of this therapy to classroom discipline and achievement.

Schools that have used these ideas have reported that suspensions were reduced by 50 to 80 percent, and that vandalism was reduced by 40 to 90 percent.

Seven Strategies to Maintain Discipline

Dr. Irwin Hyman suggests that educators use the following techniques to establish discipline without resorting to corporal punishment.

* Offer information feedback: Listen to, reflect, restate and accept a student's feelings and ideas. A teacher does not have to accept all the student's actions or statements, but can accept their feelings and thoughts as genuine.

* Praise and reinforce good behavior: Try to ignore minor misbehavior. Catch kids being good and praise them. However, the praise must be genuine; automatic or gratuitous praise doesn't work.

* Use loss of privilege: If punishment is necessary, loss of privilege, such as eliminating recess for a reasonable period, should be the first resort and should be done unemotionally.

* Observe and record: If a child is giving the teacher a hard time, the teacher should note what the child does and when he or she does it. With good notes, diagnosing a child's problem becomes easier.

* Notice classroom environment: Avoid physical situations--such as a 90-degree classroom on a Friday afternoon--that may lead to misbehavior.

* Encourage students' problem-solving strategies: Role-playing and class discussions can help students develop ways to avoid fighting, name-calling, and other disruptions.

* Appropriately express feelings: Both teachers and students need to learn to verbally express their feelings and be sensitive to each other's emotions, rather than taking momentary fatigue or anger out on each other.

The use of corporal punishment in schools is a controversial and emotional topic. However, both advocates and opponents of paddling in schools agree that students must have a nondisruptive environment in which to learn and that administrators and teachers must maintain disciplinary standards in order to achieve that goal. If nothing else, the focus on corporal punishment as an issue has created a number of alternative disciplinary methods which can be used to promote a safe and orderly campus and to enhance the educational quality of all of America's children.

RESOURCES

Organizations

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202
(202) 732-3000

National Education Association
1201 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-7200

American Federation of Teachers
555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 879-4458

The National PTA
700 North Rush St.
Chicago, IL 60611-2571
(312) 787-0977

Center for Human Development
3702 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Lafayette, CA 94549
(415) 283-7040

National Committee for Citizens in Education
10840 Little Patuxent Pkwy., Suite 301
Columbia, MD 21044
1-800-NET-WORK

Institute for Reality Therapy
7301 Medical Center Dr. #202
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(818) 888-0688

Educator Training Center
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Further Reading

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EDUCATION WEEK

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Plan To Require Office Space for Teachers Stalled

N.C. Board Move Stirs Debate Over Funding

By Ellen Flax

A rule that would have made North Carolina the first state to require that all new schools contain office space for teachers was temporarily withdrawn last week after critics complained that it had been too hastily adopted and would add too much to construction costs.

The controversial provision was part of a facilities code adopted by the state board of education at its June meeting. Drafting the code was a requirement of a 10-year, $1-billion school-construction act passed by the legislature during its 1987 session.

Under the disputed rule, all schools built after July 1 would have been required to have at least 100 square feet of work space, a desk, and a storage area for every teacher.

After the proposal was made public, however, opposition surfaced among legislators and local officials, who cited its potential cost implications and complained of a lack of consultation.

Both the board chairman and the state superintendent of education agreed last week to delay implementation of the requirement until lawmakers and board members have had a chance to review it.

Meanwhile, teachers are hailing the provision as a "long overdue" move toward professionalization.

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'Here I Was, A New Teacher'

In cities, where the changing profile of the American population is most visible, teachers struggle with some of the most challenging tasks of their profession, often against enormous odds.

In Part II of "Reform at 5: The Unfinished Agenda," Associate Editor Lynn Olson and Staff Writer Blake Rodman examine the forces producing and perpetuating a costly mismatch between the cities' vast needs and the system's instructional response.

Their report begins on page 17.

Corporal-Punishment Foes Gain Victories, See 'Best Year Ever'

By Debra Viadero

When school officials in the tiny, mountain town of Penasco, N.M., held his daughter upside down by her ankles and gave her five swats with a wooden paddle, Max Garcia was angry.

The Garcias visited the school principal and asked her not to spank 9-year-old Teresa again without first calling the family so that they could make sure the punishment was justified.

When Teresa came home black and blue from another paddling more than a year later, Mr. Garcia decided he "just couldn't take it anymore."

"Nobody has the authority to punish somebody that way," he said.

Mr. Garcia sued the school officials.

The resulting lawsuit, which made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court this year, drew national attention to the use of paddling as a means of discipline in schools.

Equally important, experts around the nation are saying, the case has become a symbol of sorts for the growing movement to abolish corporal punishment in schools. It represents the most visible victory in what has been a year of many small victories in the effort to ban physical methods of disciplining students.

Two states—Nebraska and Wisconsin—this year voted to ban paddling in their pub-

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NAEP's 'Anomaly' Blamed on Changes In Test's Design

By Robert Rothman

BOULDER, COLO.—The "anomalous" results of a 1986 reading assessment that showed steep drops in performance among some students resulted from changes in the U.S. design and administration, and did not reflect an actual decline in achievement, a panel of experts has concluded.

Over the objections of one panelist—Jeanne S. Chall, professor of education at Harvard University's graduate school of education, who argued that the declines were real—the majority of the members concluded that the technical changes may have adversely affected the performance of poorer students, driving down average scores.

In addition, they suggested, the results of the 1984 reading assessment may have been unusually high.

To prevent such problems from recurring, the panel recommended an ongoing statistical evaluation and audit of the data collection and reported findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which conducts the assessments.

"Nobody can guarantee something like this won't happen again," the panel's chairman, Edward H. Haertel, associate professor of education at Stanford University, said here last week. "But there should be procedures in place so that if a drop like this did occur, we would have enough confidence in the results we can believe even a surprising change."

"If the confidence in the assessment is such that when something surprising shows up, people look for other explana-

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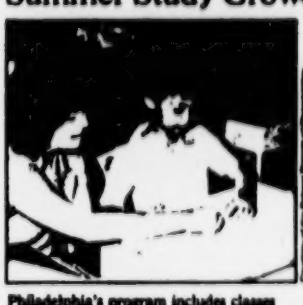
Summer Study Grows in Popularity: From Suzuki Violin to E.S.L.



Philadelphia's program includes classes to boost pupils' English proficiency.

By Deborah L. Gold

Summer school, an institution once synonymous with failed grades and catch-up work, is gradually assuming a new identity—and a new popularity among parents, students, and educators.

In addition to the traditional remedial work, summer classes are now giving students the chance to concentrate on difficult courses, maintain achievement gains, pursue hobbies, and study nontraditional subjects.

Parents are seeking out such programs, administrators say, to help meet their child-care needs and to boost their children's chances for academic success.

And for many schools, the summer session has become a time to give extra attention to students with special needs and sample innovative teaching strategies.

The U.S. Education Department has not compiled statistics on summer-school enrollment since 1978, and experts say there are no recent national data on the extent to which school systems are offering programs or the purposes that they serve.

But interviews with school administrators in several states and large school districts indicate that enrollments are up and course offerings are expanding.

Besides standard course fare, students this summer will be taking classes ranging

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Also in the news

Bush Seeks Aid for Schools Serving At-Risk
His $500-million "Merit Schools" plan would offer cash incentives for improvement.
5

Washington State Backs School-Based Reform
Experimental projects at 21 sites receive go-ahead in pioneering statewide program.
10

An 'Inflammatory' Study On Special Education
Some states are said to be more likely to place handicapped children in regular classrooms.
15

Publication Schedule

With this issue, *Education Week* suspends publication for part of the summer. The midsummer "extra" issue will be published on Aug. 3. The regular publication schedule will resume with Issue 40, dated Aug. 31.

Corporal-Punishment Foes Winning Victories

Continued from Page 1

lic schools. Their actions raised to 11 the number of states with outright bans against the practice.

In Maryland, lawmakers voted to prohibit paddling in 12 of the state's 16 counties.

And more than 20 cities in 15 states outlawed the practice this school year in their own schools. Those cities have included both small towns like Seaford, Del., and larger cities like Little Rock, Ark., and Cincinnati, Ohio.

"Enough large cities have banned corporal punishment so that 35 to 40 percent of America's children attend school without fear of being hit," said Robert Fathman, chairman of the fledgling National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools.

"The past 12 months have probably been the best 12 months for the anti-corporal-punishment movement ever," he said.

'Incomplete Victory'

Despite such successes, an estimated 2 million incidents of corporal punishment occur in schools each year. The practice is legal in the great majority of states and frequently used in the South.

Even the celebrated case of *Theresa Miera, J.D. Sanchez, Edward Leyba, Judi Mestas, and Felix Duran v. Teresa Garcia* is at best an incomplete victory.

The Supreme Court in March declined to review the case.

In doing so, it let stand a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit that gave parents like the Garcias the right to sue school officials for "grossly excessive" corporal punishment. The anti-corporal punishment movement had hoped the Court might take the opportunity to reverse its 1977 ruling upholding the use of paddling in schools.

"The *Garcia* case affects only the Rocky Mountain states and it involves only those cases of corporal punishment where it's excessive," said Adah Maurer, executive director of End Violence Against the Next Generation, Inc., a California-based group that opposes corporal punishment. "But it does set a precedent."

Teresa's injuries were so "excessive" following her first paddling that her classroom teacher noticed that her leg was bleeding and took her to the restroom. The paddle used by school officials had apparently cracked during the paddling, causing the cut on the front of Teresa's leg.

After the second paddling, a nurse who examined the girl's bruised buttocks told the Garcias that if the child had been injured at home, she would have called police authorities to report a case of child abuse.

An 'Emotional Issue'

That kind of testimony, repeated often in court cases involving corporal punishment around the nation, has been a boon to the effort to end paddling in schools.

"I think parents find it offensive that an institution can do something legally that they as parents cannot do," said Rosemary Lamela, a mother from St. Mary's County, Md., who fought to ban corporal punishment in her state.

Maryland lawmakers approved a limited ban on the practice in April—three years after an anti-corporal punishment bill was first introduced in the legislature. The final version, however, protects only 85 percent of Maryland schoolchildren from being paddled. The remaining 15 percent of students attend school in the four rural counties that were excluded from the ban.

"It's an emotional battle," noted Ms. Lamela. "It's not a battle of logic."

Ms. Lamela is also president of her county chapter of People Against Child Abuse, a state organization formed in 1984 to lobby for tougher laws against child abuse. With chapters in nearly every Maryland county, the group is credited with having provided the extra boost needed to pass the ban.

A Link to Child Abuse

Groups like P.A.C.A. are representative of a new and powerful alliance between efforts to prevent child abuse and the movement to end corporal punishment. Experts and advocates say the involvement of the more organized child-abuse-prevention groups has given the anti-paddling effort both an organizational boost and a psychological edge.

"Just having an organization against child abuse take this kind of position makes people say, 'Wait a minute. What's the connection here?' " said Ruth Lee of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

"When used severely enough, corporal punishment could in fact be child abuse," she said, "and children who were paddled in school support [anti-abuse efforts] much more as adults."

Ms. Lee's organization has quickly become one of the most influential national groups joining the fight against paddling in schools.

Other national organizations that have joined the anti-paddling movement in recent years include: the American Medical Association, the Council for Exceptional Children, the American Bar Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National P.T.A., the National Association of School Psychologists, and, most recently, the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers' union.

Some 'More or Less' Silent

"Many of the other education groups have remained more or less silent or neutral on this," noted Ms. Maurer of End Violence Against the Next Generation, Inc.

The American Federation of Teachers is characteristic of those striking a more "neutral" posture on the issue.

In a policy statement on school discipline, the union flatly states: "The A.F.T. does not believe in corporal punishment." It also adds, however, that "teachers' authority to insist upon a disciplined environment should not be jeopardized by law or by school regulations."

"That kind of grew out of a number of cases in the 1970's, where teachers became embroiled in conflicts among students and the teacher attempts to break it up and winds up getting sued," said Ruth Whitman, a spokesman for the union.

Likewise, the National School Boards Association has said decisions over whether to paddle students are best left to local school boards.

"It's the state and local education associations that oppose us that are the real problem," said Irwin Hyman, director of the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in Schools at Temple University.

"The vast majority of teachers do not receive a single course devoted to discipline in the classroom," Mr. Hyman wrote in a recent article. "As a result, since many teachers were themselves paddled or witnessed paddling, they consider it standard operating procedure."

Teacher Opposition

In Ohio, where a proposed statewide ban against corporal punishment is currently pending and a number of school districts are seeking to outlaw the practice on their own, anti-corporal-punishment advocates said educators have proved to be some of their strongest opponents.

The Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, for example, while not opposing outright that school district's new ban on paddling, has argued for a slower, more cautious approach to instituting it.

"We were saying, 'we can live without corporal punishment, but you'd better be damn sure to put some alternatives in place and fund them,' " said Tom Mooney, president of the union local. "We've got an addiction in a sense to corporal punishment in this district and it's going to have to be a carefully planned withdrawal, which it hasn't been so far."

The state's largest teachers' union, the Ohio Education Association, is fighting the proposed statewide ban on corporal punishment on the ground that use of the practice could serve as a bargaining chip in contract negotiations with local school districts.

"To me," said Mr. Fathman of the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools, "that amounts to holding my kids hostage."

Mr. Fathman, who also spearheads efforts in Ohio to outlaw corporal punishment, speaks from experience.

He said school officials in Marysville, Ohio, paddled his daughter in 1st grade after she failed to follow written directions on a reading worksheet.

The directions instructed the children to circle the words on the sheet that sounded alike. Instead, Nicole Fathman underlined the words. She was paddled along with four other children who had made similar errors, such as forgetting to put their names at the top of the paper or skipping several of the items on the worksheet.

"We found her crying in bed at 10 o'clock at night and she had been too ashamed to tell us why," he said.

Mr. Fathman said his efforts at the time to have the teacher reprimanded or convince the Marysville school board to ban paddling went nowhere.

"I didn't know how entrenched corporal punishment was in the minds of educators in Ohio schools," he said.

Psychological Trauma

Nicole Fathman's experiences with corporal punishment may be typical in one respect, national experts say.

According to Mr. Hyman, most young children are paddled, as Nicole was, for relatively minor misbehaviors—talking in class, failing to do homework, and giggling.

Other research conducted over the years through Mr. Hyman's center has shown that minority students, particularly males, are up to

Continued on Following Page

Legislative Score Board
(As of June 1)

States That Forbid Corporal Punishment in Schools:

New Jersey	1867
Massachusetts	1971
Hawaii	1973
Rhode Island	1975
Maine	1975
New Hampshire	1975
Vermont	1984
New York	1985
California	1987
Nebraska	1988
Wisconsin	1988

(And under federal jurisdiction: the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and overseas military bases)

States With Bills Currently in the Legislative Process:

Alaska	Minnesota
Ohio	Delaware
Virginia	Pennsylvania
Michigan	

States With Stalled Bills To Be Reintroduced in 1989:

Indiana	Washington
North Dakota	Kentucky
Iowa	

States Where Local Efforts Are Winning Individual School Districts:

Colorado	Connecticut
Oregon	Missouri
Kansas	Illinois
Arizona	Texas
Louisiana	South Dakota
New Mexico	Arkansas
Wyoming	Florida
	North Dakota

SOURCE: Committee to End Violence Against the Next Generation Inc.

Continued from Preceding Page

four times more likely to be paddled than their white classmates. And special-education students are the most frequent candidates of all for a paddling.

"We once thought it was racial but it's not," said Mr. Hyman. "The best predictor of who is going to get abused is socioeconomic and a greater percentage of black kids are going to be poor."

"So, when you've got kids who themselves have problems at home, and in school they're going to have problems, to hit them more creates a cyclical effect," he said.

Beyond the physical pain of the punishment, Mr. Hyman said such disciplining can produce long-term psychological trauma in children.

In recent studies, Mr. Hyman describes what he calls "educator-induced post-traumatic stress disorder" in children who have been physically or verbally abused in schools.

The disorder, which Mr. Hyman likens to a similar condition in Vietnam veterans, can be characterized in children by nightmares, bed-wetting, changes in personality, avoidance of school, some type of re-experiencing of the trauma, aggressive acting out, stomachaches, headaches, and a variety of other symptoms.

"You have to remember that the abuse occurs in a place where kids have to keep returning day after day," he said. "It's done by a trusted care-giver and the community supports the idea."

'Spare the Rod'

In a number of other states, opposition to corporal-punishment bans has come not from educators but from fundamentalist Christians who take literally Solomon's Biblical admonition: "spare the rod, spoil the child."

"I think there's a vast difference between child abuse and properly administered corporal punishment," said Marvin Munyon, president of the Wisconsin Association of Christian Schools and an opponent of legislative efforts to ban corporal punishment in his state.

"One of the biggest abuses of children today is raising them without discipline," he said. "And I have a real problem with the state telling Christian schools—and these are schools where discipline is part of the total curriculum—that 'we're going to dictate part of your curriculum.' "

Mr. Munyon represents only 32 Christian schools attended by 2,500 children. Much larger organizations representing the state's Lutheran and Roman Catholic schools favored the ban against school paddling.

Yet the outspoken educator succeeded in convincing Wisconsin lawmakers to amend private schools out of the final bill to outlaw school paddling.

"While they are a small minority, they are a vocal minority," said state Senator Joseph Czarnezki, a Democrat from Milwaukee and sponsor of the ban.

More Debate Predicted

Advocates on both sides of the argument in that state say their battles are far from over.

Mr. Czarnezki said he planned to introduce another bill next session that would expand the paddling ban to private schools.

Mr. Munyon has said he will fight it.

The issue is also expected to surface again in legislatures in Ohio, Indiana, North Dakota, Iowa, Washington, and Kentucky, according to a survey compiled by End Violence Against the Next Generation, Inc.

And the U.S. Supreme Court may yet be faced with another corporal-punishment case.

That case involves two kindergarten girls from Tyler, Tex., who were each paddled five times with a wooden board for "snickering" in the hallway. The parents of Crystal Cunningham and Ashley Johnson claim that their daughters suffered severe black and blue marks and psychological trauma as a result of the experience.

"Crystal has been so upset I've had to hold her and go to sleep with her every night," said the girl's mother, Ruby Cunningham.

The lawsuit is currently on file in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans—one of the few circuits that has not yet established the right of parents to sue, as Mr. Garcia did, over excessive corporal punishment.

That conflict between the Fifth Circuit and other appellate circuits increases the likelihood that the High Court will take up the matter in the event that the Fifth Circuit turns down the case or rules against the plaintiffs, according to lawyers for the families.

Whatever the outcome, such cases—as well as legislative efforts in a number of states—are being closely watched by the anti-corporal-punishment movement. Those advocates say they hope to equal or better the string of successes they experienced this year.

"It's not a question of if we get rid of corporal punishment," predicted Mr. Fathman of Ohio. "It's a question of when we do."

New research shows that praise works best

Should You Spare The Rod?

BY EARL UBELL

WE ALL KNOW THAT praise works better than punishment in helping a child to learn or to behave. Or do we? Scientific observations reveal that parents and teachers alike tend to scold, mock, deprive and strike children more often than they offer a few kind words.

Walk into any classroom. Count the number of times the teacher praises his or her pupils; also count the condemnations, the insults, the threats. Negative words, as scientific research shows, outnumber helpful words by 3 to 1 (or more) in most classrooms. Ironically, punishment works only to control the worst behaviors—fighting, lying, cheating, stealing.

The National Institute of Education estimates that school vandalism costs this country almost $500 million a year. In one California school system, a praise-and-reward program paid off by cutting school vandalism by 78.5 percent, and one school saved $25,000 over the previous year. Other schools have reduced abs[illegible]ism from 33 percent to a scant 2 percent with fre[illegible]a and other rewards for perfect attendance.

The Los Angeles County Office of Education developed a "constructive discipline" program for students. Its chief architects were G. Roy Mayer, a professor of education at California State University at Los Angeles, and Thomas W. Butterworth, now a retired consultant. The program cut vandalism and absenteeism in Los Angeles schools. Parents easily can adapt it at home. There are three parts to the technique:

1) Reward good behavior with praise, recognition, prizes and privileges.

2) Ignore minor infractions or work out deals to reward children for reducing minor misbehavior.

3) Punish only *major* misbehavior—vandalism, truancy, disruption, fighting, resisting authority, drug use. (The punishments in schools range from a conference called with student and parents to suspension, expulsion and even a call to the police.) Constant punishment actually induces students to escape through tardiness, truancy or dropping out of school. Children punished for every little thing also become more violent and destructive. It was found that vandalism was highest in schools where teachers abused their students the most. After a special teachers' training program on how to be more positive, the incidence of vandalism in those schools plummeted.

Corporal punishment—spanking, paddling, whipping—actually may teach children to be physically aggressive toward those less able to defend themselves. (Physically abused children often grow up to be abusive parents.)

Marisela Adams, a school counselor in California, with some students who earned praise for perfect attendance.

The absenteeism program at San Gabriel High School in California uses constructive discipline this way: Marisela Adams, the attendance counselor, sets up clear rules for unexcused tardiness or absences. The first incident results in a talk with a teacher; the second causes a postcard to be sent to the youngster's home. At the ninth incident, the student comes in for a four-hour Saturday work/study program. The twelfth truancy or tardiness results in suspension.

On the positive side, students with perfect attendance are eligible for free pizzas, hamburgers, football game tickets and buttons saying, "I am perfect."

Beth Sulzer-Azaroff, a professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, says, "With positive techniques, children learn better and retain their lessons longer. What's more, the positive approach to learning is fun."

She cautions to be careful with praise, however, and gives these hints: Praise the deed, not the child. You might say, for example, "That's a well-drawn picture, Lilly." Not, "You're a good artist, Lilly." And your facial expression must say, "I mean it."

For children who have been starved for praise, words alone may not work, so tangible rewards are given. Some teachers give out points for good behavior and the points are later traded, like Green Stamps, for prizes. Such a scheme is called a contract. And parents can adapt it to reward a child for any desired behavior—washing dishes, taking out the trash, studying, good table manners. Parents and child agree on what kind of behavior wins points, how many points get the prize and what the prize is. Parents must never fail to honor a commitment.

Once the behavior is learned, set up a new contract for a new behavior. Phase out the rewards for learned behavior, so that it becomes important for its own sake. Also, to keep the contract intact, if a child fails to win points for some days, ignore this failure.

Many teachers and parents argue that children should not be rewarded for things they ought to do anyway. They call that bribery. Professors Sulzer-Azaroff and Mayer point out that bribery induces illegal or immoral acts. By rewarding good behavior, they note, you are not inducing something illegal or immoral. The reward is to the child's advantage, not to the advantage of the reward-giver. Mayer adds that most adults are paid for their work and says there is nothing wrong with paying children for *their* "work."

A three-point "constructive discipline" plan nets good results in schools—ir luding a dramatic drop in vandalism

Mike Royko

Spare the rod, save your hide

A kind-hearted lady in Florida has asked me to help sound the alarm about a terrible threat to the well-being of children in that state.

"A dreadful condition has prevailed in Florida for years," she said, "and I would hope you find it appalling enough to write something."

What has upset her is that Florida is one of the few states that permit public school teachers to paddle the backsides of students who have been unruly.

And she sent along a bundle of news stories that, she said, shows how "violence always begets violence."

The stories were about a 13-year-old student in Fort Walton Beach who had been given three whacks on the bottom by an assistant principal.

The boy went home and told his parents. So his father went to the school, looked up the assistant principal and punched him out. The police were called and charges and counter-charges were filed.

Naturally, this touched off great public debate, with people in that community writing to the local newspapers to praise the father, condemn the assistant principal, or berate the father and praise the assistant principal.

Some said that a student being struck by a teacher shows how violent and barbaric our society has become. Others say it is a wonderful practice and that the violent father should be thrown in jail.

Which led the nice lady in Florida to ask me to express an opinion.

After giving it considerable thought, I've come to the conclusion that I really don't know if it's a good or a bad practice.

I suppose if I were a teacher, and 30 or 40 rowdy kids were giving me a migraine, I might find it satisfying to help make them better little citizens by giving them a whack or two.

On the other hand, as a parent I'm not sure that I'd want a teacher or a principal hitting my kid. Discipline should be my responsibility. After all, if I raise the kid, feed and clothe him, plan for his well-being and future, why should I let some stranger have all that fun?

Actually, what surprises me about this story is that there are teachers or school administrators who have the reckless courage to paddle students.

In this short-tempered society, people shoot at each other for driving too slowly or changing lanes without their blinkers on. So that assistant principal may have been fortunate to escape with nothing more than a few stitches in his lip.

I mentioned the Florida incident to a friend who teaches in the Chicago schools and asked him for an opinion. He said: "I don't know about Florida, but it would be a terrible practice in Chicago."

You don't believe in teachers hitting students?

"Listen," he said, "what I don't believe in is some student pulling a knife on me. You think I'd be crazy enough to paddle some overgrown kid who's liable to pick up my chair and break it over my head?

"I had one guy threaten to bring his gang around and blow me away if I gave him a failing grade. What do you think he'd do if I told him to bend over so I could paddle him? He might throw me out the window. I know a teacher who saw a kid sleeping. She woke him up so he gave her a punch in the nose. Now when she sees a kid sleeping, she just talks quieter."

The statistics seem to bear out this prudent approach.

According to school records, during the past four years, there have been 3,043 student assaults on teachers.

A school board official said: "Of course, not all of those were physical. About 990 of them were verbal threats. Only 2,057 were physical assaults."

An interesting statistic. It shows that Chicago students are doers, not talkers.

If you break down the numbers, it means that we're averaging 500 physical assaults each school year. With time out for summer vacation, that's about 50 a month. With weekends and holidays off, that's at least three school assaults a day.

When I shared these numbers with my teacher friend, he said: "Sure, and there would be a lot more than that, but we're smart enough not to provoke them. That's the secret. Don't get them mad at you. Remember, we're outnumbered about 50 to 1."

You make it sound like a prison guard's job.

"Are you kidding?" he said. "The guards have bars and locks for protection. We're right in the cells with them."

24

DIANA HEMBREE

The Tragic Side of Classroom Punishment

"I thought if I killed myself, then at least I wouldn't have to go back to school," says a third-grader from Crosby, Texas.

JOSHUA TERRELL is eight years old, too small to aim his family shotgun with precision. His parents, moreover, have never let him know where they store the shotgun shells, a precaution that may have saved his life last winter when it thwarted his plans to shoot himself.

The third-grader, who lives in Crosby, Texas, gives a surprising reason for wanting to die: He'd been paddled at school.

One day, he recalls, for horseplay and talking in class, the vice principal hit him twice with a board, leaving a large purple bruise on his bottom. "At first I wanted to break every window in the school," he says. But then he turned his anger on himself. "I thought if I killed myself, then at least I wouldn't have to go back to school," he says, staring at the tops of his sneakers. "For three weeks that's all I could think about."

The boy planned his suicide in eerie detail. He had decided either to hang himself from his living room balcony with a jump rope or fire the shotgun into his mouth—"if I could reach the trigger and do it in the woods, so I wouldn't mess up the house." When he revealed his plans to several classmates, a teacher overheard. An alarmed counselor notified his parents. The Terrells took him to a therapist, who confirmed that their son was severely depressed and needed treatment.

Joshua's is among the many disturbing cases of children in the United States who have said they wanted to kill themselves after a school paddling. Suicide is rare among children under fifteen, and in fact there have been no formal studies to document whether children can be so traumatized by corporal punishment that they become suicidal. But looking back over the past two years, parents and corporal punishment researchers can identify more than two dozen children across the country who have attempted or threatened suicide after repeated classroom paddlings.

"The child thinks, 'If the school thinks I'm worthless, then I must be worthless,'" says psychologist Irwin Hyman, who directs the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment, at Temple University in Philadelphia. "School

paddlings may cause feelings of low self-esteem and helplessness, which are part of being depressed. And unfortunately, severe depression and hopelessness can be a precursor to suicidal feelings."

Over the past 12 years, Hyman says, he has studied hundreds of corporal punishment cases nationwide. He has interviewed dozens of children so disturbed by corporal punishment that they suffer from nightmares, depression, and other symptoms like those of some Vietnam veterans. Most of these children are not necessarily suicidal, he says, but suffer depression that, left untreated, could lead to self-destructive behavior later on.

But some researchers are wary of these conclusions. Eugenia Broumas, a social scientist with the National Institute for Mental Health in Rockville, Maryland, says she has seen no evidence linking corporal punishment in the schools to depression and suicidal behavior. She accepts, however, that there may be some kind of connection between suicide and child abuse. "We know that humiliation causes people to lose a sense of themselves," says Broumas. And, she says, it can be among the factors that increase the risk of suicide.

"In my opinion, corporal punishment *is* child abuse," says Charlotte Ross, head of the Youth Suicide National Center in Burlingame, California. In the last 15 years, studies by psychologists have linked corporal punishment at home and in school with increased aggression, vandalism, and juvenile delinquency, and have suggested links with depression and lowered self-esteem.

"With so much evidence that nothing is worse for a child's self-esteem than this type of violent punishment, one wonders how in the world schools in this nation can even consider tolerating corporal punishment," Ross says. "It's ironic, because our schools are deluged with reams of literature talking about how to maintain children's self-esteem—and then we undo everything by this violence."

Each year more than 1 million students receive some kind of corporal punishment, according to the U.S. Department of Education—though some skeptics claim that figure is two or three times too low. The practice remains legal in 38 states, where, as a means of discipline, children from five to 18 are paddled, spanked, whipped with belts, and even tied to chairs. In rare instances, children have been struck with baseball bats and stung by electric cattle prods, according to newspaper reports.

Many school administrators insist that paddling is a disciplinary last resort, but surveys show that most paddlings are for minor offenses such as talking. Some schools paddle half their pupils each year, and most of those receiving the punishment are in elementary grades.

> "I mean, we have teachers in East Texas who shave down baseball bats and swing with both hands."

Bruises from paddlings are sometimes so severe that parents have taken their children to emergency rooms. During one 18-month period, a hospital in Columbus, Ohio, treated 28 children battered by teachers. Records from hospitals around the country show that injuries are not confined to bruises and welts, but on rare occasions have included broken bones, gashes, sprains, and concussions.

Teachers and administrators who support corporal punishment dismiss such injuries as aberrations. They say paddling is an essential tool for keeping classroom order. "The beauty of corporal punishment is that the kids can take their punishment and then forget about it," says a fourth-grade teacher in Texas.

But the practice is increasingly being criticized by organizations of parents and child advocates. Calling school paddlings "legalized child abuse," they point out that corporal punishment is banned in the public schools of every major developed country except Canada, Australia, and South Africa.

In this country, the South is corporal punishment's stronghold. Within that region are nine of the ten states with the highest rates of paddling. Texas, according to government records, reports the most paddlings—an estimated 260,000 a year. And it was Texas where the news of paddled schoolchildren who turned suicidal first came to light, not from news accounts but through the efforts of a group of concerned parents and teachers.

Former teacher Jimmy Dunne, who directs People Opposed to the Paddling of Students in Houston, argues that few people realize how severe many school paddlings really are. "I mean, we have teachers in East Texas who shave down baseball bats and swing with both hands," Dunne says. In the past few years he has logged several reports from distraught parents who said their children wanted to kill themselves because they were beaten at school.

Among these parents is Joe De La Cerda of Galveston, Texas. He says his son Joey, 11, became despondent after being paddled regularly in the first through third grades. "My son has got a very poor outlook on life," says De La Cerda. "He's talked about suicide a lot of times, about running in front of a school bus or running onto the freeway to get away from everything."

Seven-year-old Brian Arwood of Madison, Tennessee, felt a similar desperation. Although Brian's parents had asked the school not to spank or paddle their son, explaining that he was hyperactive and recovering from abuse by a babysitter, they later learned that his first-grade teacher had paddled him more than 15 times for talking, drawing pictures at the wrong time, and other infractions. During this time Brian drew picture after picture of monsters, people hanging from trees, and other images suggesting a preoccupation with death.

One morning, furious over a paddling he'd just received, Brian climbed to the top of a ten-foot-high circular slide, tied one end of a jump rope around his neck, and secured the other to the steel handholds. He remembers feeling "nothing inside" as he pushed off. The rope jerked him backward off the slide and left him swinging three feet above the ground.

"I was real scared then and trying to scream for help," says Brian, who recalls clawing at the rope around his neck. "The rope was smooshing all the air out of me. I could see all the kids underneath me, staring, circling and circling like lions in a cage. Jamie and another boy were trying to push me back up, and it seemed like it took forever for a teacher to get over to me."

Brian's mother Connie and her husband believe that their son didn't actually want to die. "It was a cry for help," she

says, "so we would finally listen to him when he talked about school."

Children like Brian—who suffer from hyperactivity or other learning disabilities—may be particularly vulnerable to trauma at school. In a three-year study of suicides among children under 15, researchers at the Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center found that half the teenagers who took their own lives had been diagnosed previously as having learning disabilities.

Sometimes these children conceal the source of their hurt. For months, ten-year-old David Turpin of Dayton, Texas, who was diagnosed with both dyslexia and a type of learning disability called "attention deficit disorder," failed to tell his parents of the near-daily paddlings he received for not completing his schoolwork. "We had no idea he was getting paddled regularly at school," says Debra Turpin, who had informed his teachers that her son had learning disorders and asked them not to hit him—ever. "We were telling him, 'It's okay now, son. The teachers understand and we understand.' But he had quit doing schoolwork, was eating compulsively and crying all the time, getting more and more frustrated. Finally he broke down and said, 'I'm so stupid I just ought to kill myself.' That's when we went into action." David spent three months in a psychiatric hospital, at a cost of $80,000, before the doctors felt it was safe to release him.

Even educators who don't agree that corporal punishment is a form of child abuse may see cause for concern in recent research. The latest federal report on youth suicide contains a study by psychiatrist Felton Earls and sociologist Lee Robins at the University of Washington Medical School in St. Louis. Analyzing interviews with 2,700 teenagers attending free clinics in ten states, they found that four percent had attempted suicide in the past year. These suicidal children were much more likely than others to have been threatened or assaulted.

Another study, led by Eva Deykin of the Harvard School of Public Health, compared teenagers hospitalized for attempted suicide with teenagers hospitalized for other reasons. The finding: Suicidal teenagers were up to four times more likely to have been seen by the state agency that investigates child abuse.

Although these studies did not look at corporal punishment, they suggest that physical pain inflicted by adults may be among the traumas that make some children try to kill themselves.

Even in the face of such research, however, some adults bent on discipline continue to act as if children are somehow immune to extreme pain and anguish. Says psychologist Israel Orbach in his 1988 book *Children Who Don't Want to Live*, "Many still find it hard to believe that children as young as five or six can sincerely wish to die—and that some actually do commit suicide. . . . It is commonly but mistakenly believed that children do not comprehend the meaning of death. In most cases, it is exactly because children *do* understand the meaning of death that they wish to die." H

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CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

In Florida, the debate rages on

● Corporal punishment: child abuse?, 2-F
● A school's alternative to paddling, 2-F

Stories by DIANE MASON
St. Petersburg Times Staff Writer

He asks: Do you want me to close the door? Then you lean forward over the back of the chair and put your hands on the seat. You're supposed to look straight ahead. They make it sting. If he puts his body into it, you're gonna cry.

Scenarios like this one, described by two middle school students, were played [illegible] during the 1984-85 school year. If you figure two "swats" (as they're often called) per incident, you could have 14,288 times that wooden paddles came down on high school, middle school and elementary school kids' bottoms last year. (About 79 times a day.

And using 1983-84 totals, paddlings were administered approximately 884 times a day throughout the state.

The Florida school system has the second highest rate of paddling in the country (Arkansas is first). In Pinellas, most all of the paddling is done in the elementary and middle schools; only two high schools, Northeast and St. Petersburg, reported paddling their students in 1983-84. (However, St. Petersburg has not paddled any students so far this year, according to principal William Gray.)

In Pinellas County, black students are paddled disproportionately to whites. Although blacks receive approximately 50 percent of the corporal punishment meted out, they represent only about 17 percent of the school population. Taking into consideration the proportion of blacks to whites in the total school population, it can be expected that black students receive [illegible] more often than white students.

Just about every time you go into the office you hear someone coming out saying OUCH! (boy, 14)

Let's put it this way. Each dean gets his tennis lessons every day. (boy, 12)

Florida law upholds the practice of paddling, but the law itself is an anomaly. Florida is one of only two states (North Carolina is the other) whose statutes give [illegible] decide whether or not to paddle. This means that the policies about which kids get hit and which don't depend on the philosophy of each individual school principal and his or her administrative team.

Jack Levine, executive director of the Florida Center for Children and Youth in Tallahassee, wants to see corporal punishment stopped. But he believes that Florida is still some distance away from the ideal: abolition of corporal punishment. The first step, says Levine, is to give the authority to the school board members, a provision of a bill introduced this session in the House by Rep. Eleanor Weinstock, D-Palm Beach, (HB1010). Thus, whether to paddle would be something each district could decide for itself.

Ralph Turlington, commissioner of education for the state of Florida, does not want the state to prohibit corporal punishment. Turlington points out that there are schools which operate successfully without using corporal punishment but there are other principals who "operate excellent schools using it." Whether or not corporal punishment is used, says Turlington, "is not a decisive factor in [illegible] of the quality of schools."

Last October, the Pinellas County Council of PTAs voted to support a state PTA proposal to ban corporal punishment. At the November state convention, because of controversy over the issue, the statewide PTA position was modified. The state PTA proposal now recommends that corporal punishment remain on the books with the stipulation that the school must have the parents' permission to whack their child. (Current law does not require that parents' wishes be followed [illegible] accompanying story). At the November state PTA convention, says president Sally Scanlan, corporal punishment was "one of the hottest issues discussed."

Throughout the world, however, and in a growing number of states, this issue is ended. Not one country in continental Europe (East and West) permits corporal punishment of school children.

In the United States, corporal punishment is now illegal in New York, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, Maine and Hawaii. Several cities have banned corporal punishment even though the states still permit it, among them Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Oakland, Omaha, Pittsburgh, Portland, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

It is no longer legal in the United States for public employees to beat prisoners, military personnel or inmates of institutions, according to a task force report by the National Education Association. The report points out that only beating school children is still legal.

Policy statements favoring abolition of corporal punishment have been adopted by the National Education Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, the American Public Health Association, the Society for Adolescent Medicine, the American Psychological Association, the United Nations Human Rights Committee and the Association for Humanistic Education.

But in Florida the debate rages on. Those who support corporal punishment argue that paddling is used only as a "last resort" for those students who consistently break rules and who have not responded to any other disciplinary measures. Those who oppose corporal punishment say that paddling is archaic, degrading and humiliating — and simply does not work as a tool for changing behavior.

Does corporal punishment improve behavior?

"All of the research suggests that corporal punishment only temporarily suppresses behavior. It doesn't teach behavior," says Irwin Hyman, Director of the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in the Schools at Temple University in Philadelphia. Hyman was in St. Petersburg recently to conduct a workshop at the Juvenile Welfare Board on alternatives to corporal punishment. He notes that a recent survey of more than 400 schools which abolished corporal punishment within the past ten years found "no major changes in misbehaving or discipline."

Please see CORPORAL 2-F

Can your child be paddled without your consent?

It is legal for the principal to paddle your child without your permission.

According to Florida law, school boards do not have the authority to prohibit school officials from paddling students even if the parent does not want corporal punishment. However, the Youth Services Advisory Committees' Abuse, Neglect and Dependency Committee notes in its recommendations: "School boards should make available to all schools in their district a standard form for parents advising them that they may exclude their children from corporal punishment." Still, it is up to the school administration to honor that request.

However, without any written request, when the parent or guardian signs the "Acknowledgement" on the back page of the Code of Student Conduct, this indicates that the parent accepts the policies outlined in the Code, and could be construed as blanket permission for any disciplinary action within the Code.

Also, the Code does not require principals to call parents and inform them of the paddling, either before or after the fact. In a memo entitled "Guidelines for Corporal Punishment," August 21, 1985, to Pinellas County principals from Vyrle Davis and Bill Williamson, directors of discipline for the county schools reads: "... principals are encouraged to seriously consider excluding from corporal punishment those students whose parents have requested, in writing, that their son or daughter not be paddled."

"I think you would find that the majority of the principals in Pinellas County honor that request," says Sally Scanlan, President of Pinellas County Council of PTA's.

Corporal from 1-9

"(Corporal punishment) is coercive power," says Ruth Inness, a St. Petersburg mental health counselor who specializes in adolescent psychology. Inness is also director of guidance and counseling for Shorecrest Preparatory School (which does not paddle students) in St. Petersburg. "Corporal punishment helps promote lack of personal responsibility for one's behavior," Inness says. She explains that punishment shifts the control of one's actions to an external source — the punisher — leaving the child free to evade the responsibility for improving his or her behavior. In her view, corporal punishment says to the child: As long as no one is watching, you can do what you want. If you get caught, you get paddled, and then you keep on doing whatever you were doing.

Question: Do you do it again after being paddled? Answer: Not that day. You wait about a week and then you do it again. (boy, 13)

"What we want is for kids to accept internal responsibility for their actions," Inness says, adding that rather than creating a how-much-can-you-get-away-with contest (as corporal punishment does) we need to ask the student: Why are you doing what you're doing? Can you see that it is not helping you? What can you do about it? [illegible] part in modifying the behavior. With corporal punishment, the child does not take part in the solution.

You feel relieved because you're out of trouble. (boy, 14)

Most psychologists agree that "negative reinforcement" (such as paddling, where the consequence of the behavior is pain), is not an effective learning tool. Indeed, the principals we talked with had no illusions that they were creating a "positive" learning environment when they wielded the wood. Still, they felt that this was an action necessitated in certain circumstances, namely, when they had used up all of the other disciplinary measures and were stuck at the end of their disciplinary rope.

The alternatives to corporal punishment are becoming slimmer, says Scott Rose, Superintendent of Pinellas County schools. For example, he says, after school detention is a problem for a student who is bussed to school and whose parents work and can't pick him up. "We don't want him walking 15 miles home," Rose says.

"When we go to corporal punishment it means we've exhausted all resources with that particular child," says Louis McCoy, principal of Shore Acres Elementary, which had the highest rate of paddlings in Pinellas elementary schools in 1984-85 according to yearly suspension and corporal punishment reports. That year, according to the report, Shore Acres paddled 430 times — a rate of 82.5 paddlings per 100 students.

Paddling, says McCoy, is "only for the express purpose of shocking or reminding a student not to do that again." If you let a child get away with misbehavior, McCoy says, "he develops problems — habits — we have to live with in society. We have to deal with them when they're disruptive, or else they'll take over. You can't let them tear up the school."

McCoy says he takes time to explain to the child why the paddling is being administered. "I say: I'm going to give you two licks — two paddlings — because I want you to understand you don't throw chairs across the room."

Bill Williamson, director of discipline for the north county schools says, "I doubt if you'd see any good research on the effectiveness of corporal punishment." But he adds that there is a great deal of [illegible] to taking it away as an option. "Some elementary and middle school principals feel it is effective with some students," Williamson says, adding that he hears parents defend corporal punishment on the grounds that "when we were growing up, we got it, and look at us. We're doing fine. We're not aggressive. We don't fight."

In her work with young people, Inness often asks students how they feel when they've been paddled. "It's anger," she reports. "They feel angry." When she asks them if they have learned anything and if they plan to change their behavior, they answer "No." Inness points out: "They will say to a person who has crushed them – 'Yes, I am sorry I did it' — because they don't want to get hit again. It's self-preservation. But it's not an effective way of changing behavior."

It's kind of humorous. You come back in class and just laugh. Even if it hurt, you come back and say it doesn't hurt. You sort of brag about it. (boy, 14)

If the child learns anything, says Inness, it is that "might is right" — that it's better to be the one with the paddle than the one bent over, and "just wait until I get big enough!"

I feel like hitting her back. (boy, 13)

The task force report prepared by the National Education Association quotes Burton Henry of the California State College at Los Angeles: "What the child really learns from corporal punishment is that he lives in a violent world, that it is better to be strong than weak, better to be the spanker than the spankee, plus the subconscious determination that when he achieves X amount of years or inches or pounds, he too will be in a position to teach somebody else 'a good lesson.'"

You just wanna dock her. (middle school boy)

Lou Virginia Graves, principal of Riviera Middle School (which had the highest number and rate of paddlings among middle schools during 1984-85 — 492 paddlings at rate of 37.2 per 100 students) is emphatic about differentiating between the behavior and the student. "I tell them: It's not you, it's the behavior." Graves says she does not want the students to think they are bad people, but only wants them to understand that their behavior is wrong. She feels that she puts "some dignity" into her paddlings. She makes sure the child's hands are down and out of the way, so they are not hit accidentally, and she closes the door and afterwards offers the child privacy, "so he doesn't go out with tears in his eyes. Before they leave here, I get a feeling they understand it's the behavior."

John Singletary, principal of Meadowlawn Middle School (which reported 409 paddlings in the 1984-85

If suspension and corporal punishment are either / or choices, then it follows that when one goes up the other goes down . . . However, many statistics refute this claim.

school year), says paddling isn't effective with every student. "We do try to identify the student (where) we think it might modify the behavior."

Temple University researcher Irwin Hyman cautions that guessing who is the best candidate for spanking is risky business. Even a light tap on a kid who had never been hit before can have a profound impact psychologically, Hyman says. "They are much more vulnerable. But teachers don't know the vulnerability of kids." Hyman says that the student for whom corporal punishment "works" is probably so vulnerable to embarrassment and shame that a less violent measure, one with fewer negative side effects, would have worked just as well. As for the chronic spankees — the ones who are back again and again — Hyman points out that it's obvious that paddling did not "work" for them.

After I got swatted (for playing hookey) it made me even more mad, so I left again. I just wanted to leave — I didn't feel like staying. (boy, 15)

McCoy insists that corporal punishment is "to help the child. I love kids," he says. "I'm not going to do the wrong thing. We have to help them."

The question remains: What do we want to help them to be?

In the opinion of psychologists and educators who favor its abolishment, paddling sabotages the young person's self-motivation and internal controls. Additionally, as the NEA report quotes Lee J. Cronbach in *Educational Psychology*, (Harcourt, Brace, 1954), "Strong punishment develops anxiety, dislike for the task, and hostility toward school." In a statement by the American Civil Liberties Union: "The deliberate association of pain with learning is found to instill a distaste for the art of study that may be of lasting influence."

Punishment triggers high emotion, observes William R. Hafling, a St. Petersburg psychologist and director of Bay Area Psychological Services. This emotion interferes with the learning centers in the brain, Hafling explains. The result is that "the wrong message is retained." The message is not: I did something wrong. Rather, it is: I don't like that person. The adult punisher becomes a role model for the morality and rightness of punishment and for the superiority of the bigger guy, Hafling says. So, "The kid thinks 'oh, okay — I get it' and goes home and hits his sister or whips the dog."

In an article in *Youth Law News*, Jordan Rush, founder of Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education, writes: "(Corporal punishment) requires a level of submissiveness unequalled by anything to be found in normal adult relationships . . . It destroys the victim's sense of self-worth. It violates the sanctity of the body. It disempowers. It prepares the child to be a willing target for any adult predator, inside or outside the school."

Does violence beget violence?

Hafling, who has conducted research into the causes of violent behavior, says, "Punishment is a great motivator. It inevitably leads to people being violent and vicious." After a paddling, he says, "Watch a kid smolder, like watching a bomb and waiting for it to go off."

In its task force report, the National Education Association (NEA) states: "Physical punishment develops aggressive hostility." The report quotes authorities who observe: Children corporally punished may show good behavior on the surface, but inwardly they are seething.

pent-up aggression leads to fights with other children; cracking down may bring students into immediate compliance, but it produces more trouble in the long run; spanking sets into motion a vicious circle; and in an excerpt from Selma Fraiberg's *The Magic Years*, "(Spanking) creates its own appetite . . . it is self-perpetuating because no learning takes place and the cycle of crime and punishment renews itself interminably."

So who benefits in paddling? Hafling says the punisher gets the payoff. Hafling does not dismiss the anger and exasperation that the adult probably feels, but rather he points out that the punishment is for the adult, not the child. "It's revenge; it's release for the person doing it." When we are mad, we enjoy punishing others, Hafling says. It gives us a release for our own pent-up rage. Let's not delude ourselves, Hafling says, by saying that we are *teaching somebody something* or doing this for the good of the student. "If we're going to do it, let's call it what it is."

When they say: 'I really don't want to do this' — they're lying. (middle school student)

Often, school officials point out that parents encourage the schools to spank their children. What often happens, however, is that the kids who are getting spanked at home are the ones whose parents want them [illegible] — that is, getting a double-whammy. And they are caught in a catch-22. The NEA cites several studies that show that children who are beaten at home are most likely to be disruptive at school and that parents who use more severe punishment have more aggressive children. Thus the circle of violence.

In the most recent research conducted by the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternative in the Schools, Hyman has identified what he calls "educator induced post-traumatic stress disorder" to describe the link between the use of severe punishment and the psychological effect on the child. The result of this research shows that corporal punishment can have a profound emotional effect, and in extreme cases can lead to withdrawal, bedwetting, sleep disturbances, loss of interest in activities and stress-related health problems. Studies of child abuse suggest that when children are punished with physical force they in turn are trained to employ physical violence to deal with problems.

When children are corporally punished, Hyman says, it's not just the paddled ones who suffer. Children who have witnessed abuse often get painted with the same emotional brush. In one of his articles he writes that the use of physical force "diminishes the human dignity of all children (and) reflects a chronic punitive bias toward children in our culture."

"I remember every teacher who punished me," Hafling says, pointing out that most adults do — evidence that these experiences hang on for years in our repository of awful memories.

You feel humiliated. (boy, 14)

The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse (NCPCA) points out the paradox that exists in our national policies on punishment. In its 1983 statement, NCPCA recommends that corporal punishment of schoolchildren "contradicts the national policy dedicated to the eradication of child abuse."

Is paddling useful as a last resort?

None of the school officials we interviewed who favor corporal punishment sounds or acts like vengeful, paddle-swinging ogres. Mostly, they sound frustrated. They wish they didn't have these problems at all. They wish they were worrying about curriculum, not smokers in the restroom. Some, like Lou Virginia Graves and John Hagbetary, wish they had time-out rooms (where disruptive students can be sent until they're ready to return to the classroom). They care for the children in their schools. Most believe they are doing the best they can with the tools and resources available to them. All of them seem caught in an outdated system that no longer works. Their view is that in dealing with serious discipline problems, you are stuck with two unattractive choices: suspension or paddling.

The trouble is, in many schools it comes down to this. And when these are the only two alternatives, the parents often prefer paddling because it doesn't look as serious on a child's record and doesn't put the child out on the streets, of particular concern now that so many parents work outside the home. "The parents want us to take over," Graves says. "(They) say: 'Would you give my child a swat?' "

"Some parents are openly in favor of corporal punishment and use it frequently — maybe too frequently — at home," says Superintendent Rose. When there is a problem, Rose says, the parents don't want the student sent home; they want the schools to handle it. "They say: 'You get out a board and beat him.' "

When they call and ask: 'Can we give her a swat?' she (mother) says yeah, go ahead, she's so bad. (girl, 13)

They (parents) love it. Then they won't have to do the dirty work. (boy, 14)

If I deserve it, she (mother) gives permission to do it. But she doesn't hit me at home. (boy, 13)

The students may choose paddling because it's over quickly, they can have it in lieu of detention and their parents may not ever find out about the trouble.

I'd rather get a swat. It's quick and it goes away fast. Detention is boring — you just sit there. I'd rather have pain than waste my time. (boy, 14, who has been paddled more than 30 times this year).

The school officials choose it, believing that children belong in school, not floating in suspension. "I don't like suspensions," McCoy says, explaining that unless parents are available to supervise the children (difficult when so many parents work), it is not effective.

If suspension and corporal punishment are either/or choices, then it follows that when one goes up the other goes down. Scott Rose, superintendent for Pinellas County Schools says that is what happens in Pinellas County. However, other statistics refute this claim. Counterwise, the schools that have the highest corporal punishment rates also have the highest suspension rates, according to the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in the Schools.

According to the Code of Student Conduct of the Pinellas County schools, corporal punishment and suspension are not either/or choices. Corporal punishment is listed fourth under "Disciplinary Action and Procedures," preceded by counseling, detention and time-out room. Altogether there are 11 types of disciplinary action suggested in this section, and nowhere are corporal punishment and suspension set up as "last resorts" or either/or options. The introduction to this section reads "The following types of disciplinary action may be considered. However, there is no intent that this listing implies that any sequence must be followed."

Under the guidelines for corporal punishment, the Code says: "No blanket rules for the use of corporal punishment shall be established for any specific behavior." At one middle school, students said they were paddled (after one warning) for chewing gum, talking out of turn, shouting at a teacher, being late for class, not turning in a writing assignment and "going in the wrong gym door."

What's a school to do?

Schools that have chosen to limit corporal punishment have experienced extremely few discipline problems as a result, according to a report prepared for the Juvenile Welfare Board by the Youth Services Advisory Committees' Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Committee. (Please see accompanying story on Tyrone Middle School.)

Other disciplinary alternatives described in the report are: time-out rooms with highly structured curriculum, effective placement and referral procedures, and positive communication; counseling; in-school suspension; work details; parent conferences; Saturday school; restitution in cases of theft and vandalism; peer and cross-age counseling; withdrawal of privileges, student disciplinary boards.

In its 1983 policy statement, the National Center for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect included these suggestions among its recommendations: in-service training for staff members on techniques for working with students; teams of adults to take students aside and counsel them during periods of instability; social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists to work with students and teachers; other staff members to work with students when teacher needs a break.

These options are "much more respectful of the child" says Jack Levine, who urges more one-on-one contact with kids who are showing themselves to be disruptive.

"I've seen peer counseling groups work wonderfully in some pretty tough middle schools," he says. For example, class periods are used for group sessions where kids set limits for each other by drawing up contracts on behavior, school work that needs to be done, etc. "This is peer influence for the positive. It creates an environment in which the authority is not someone who is hanging over the child but is actually someone who is sitting next to the child."

Levine points out that methods like this require training of students, and "administrators must be willing to step back and let students relate to each other on a one-to-one basis, rather than a roomful of students whose attention is all directed toward one person for all that control."

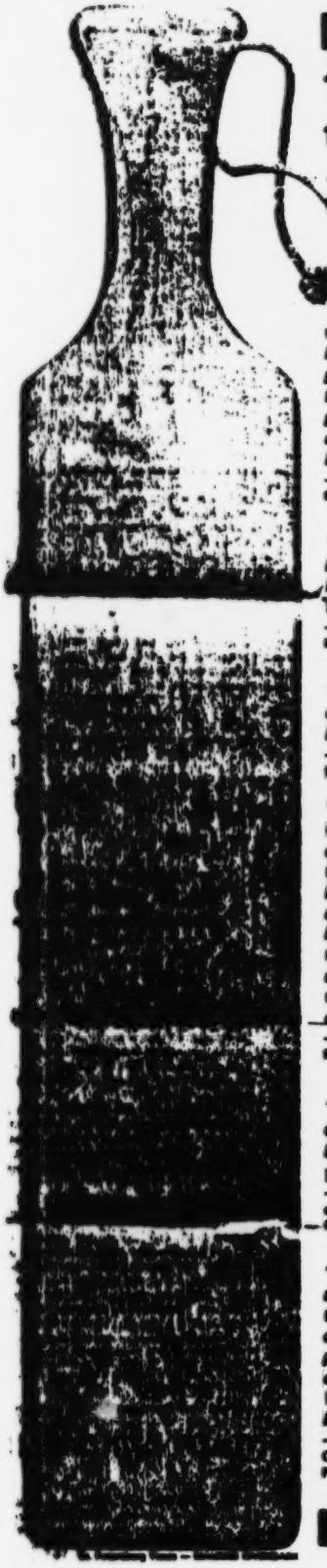
John Thompson, principal of Lakeview Fundamental School, which does not paddle students, has a participatory approach that involves the student, the parent, and the teacher. Staff members pledge they will communicate with the parents and be available to work closely with parents on behalf of the child. Thompson says: "Parent participation — it's the key."

Non-punitive disciplinary methods are "more complicated than administering smacks to the child's behind," Levine says. "But we've come past the age where there are going to be simple solutions to some pretty complex problems that kids are coming to school with. The real issue is what is sound educational policy (and) what works to get a child to be comfortable in a learning environment and to succeed in school."

The paddlings hurt; they should just talk to us instead of a choice of paddle or detention. (boy, 14)

Levine says: "Administering the paddle is like tripping — like throwing an obstacle in the child's path."

At Lakeview, says Thompson, "children are happy. They come to school without cussing."



Two sides of the paddle

"The paddle must be of wood and be no more than two feet long nor more than one-half inch thick and no less than four inches wide. It must be smooth and with no sharp edges or holes. A handle must be provided just large enough for a one-hand grip . . . The punishment shall be administered to the buttocks."

— Guidelines for Corporal Punishment, Pinellas County Schools

". . . Corporal punishment is more nearly analogous to being struck by a policeman for parking illegally."

— National Education Association Task Force on Corporal Punishment

"You may have to tap a child to teach that you don't kick your teacher."

— Louis McCoy, principal of Shore Acres Elementary

"I go back to the vision of what it means from the child's point of view to have to bend over a desk and be beaten in school. There's absolutely no more humiliating circumstance than to have a stranger — a state employee — be able to have that kind of power over you."

— Jack Levine, executive director, Florida Center for Children and Youth

"There must be some value or children wouldn't have been paddled over the years."

— Donald Van Fleet, executive assistant superintendent for administration, Pinellas County Schools.

"Why are the kids in Florida so bad that it's one of the top two states in the country in terms of proportion of use of corporal punishment? What's so bad about the kids in Florida?"

— Irwin Hyman, director of the National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in the Schools

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Discipline
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School Spankings: Lessons In Violence

85

By Harriet C. Frazier

Corporal punishment in schools is bad public policy. In three separate surveys, conducted in 1979-80, '81-82 and '83-84, the U.S. Department of Education has identified those states whose school authorities most often punish schoolchildren by striking them.

At present 30 juvenile inmates are on death rows in the United States. They all committed their crimes (murder in every case) before their 18th birthdays. Which states contain them? With few exceptions, the juveniles on death row are in the top states for corporal punishment of school children. School authorities most frequently strike schoolchildren in 16 states, and these include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Texas. These states also house 26 of the nation's 30 juveniles on death row.

Is there a causal relationship between state-sanctioned violence in the schools and the fate of juvenile death row inmates and their victims? I don't know.

But this much can be shown. In the top 16 states for percentage of schoolchildren corporally punished, the homicide rates are significantly higher than in the remaining states: 8.72 per 100,000 population for 1983, 9.81 for 1984 and 9.34 for 1985, the last years for which figures are available.

The other states average 5.48 per 100,000 population for 1983, 5.49 for 1984 and 4.50 for 1985, or anywhere from one-third to one-half fewer killings than in the top corporal-punishment states.

It would be foolish to insist that corporal punishment in public schools is *the* cause of homicide. We simply do not know what motivates our nation's killers. We never will.

What we do know is that the rage to kill manifests itself most frequently where school authorities most often strike students. These are the same states that permit imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed under age 18. Not only do these states have most juveniles on death row, they have been the place of 90 percent of American executions in the past 11 years.

Last Nov. 9, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in an Oklahoma case (*Thompson vs. Oklahoma*) on the issue of the constitutionality of executing a death row inmate who was 15 at the time of his crime. A decision is expected soon.

There is a long history of biblical and English common law authority for flogging and executing children. Recent American examples are not wanting. Three people convicted of crimes prior to their 18th birthdays have been executed: in South Carolina in 1985 and in Texas in both 1985 and 1986. As could be expected, South Carolina and Texas rank among the top states in corporal punishment.

Is there a better way? Yes. States should abolish or severely curtail both the death penalty and corporal punishment of schoolchildren.

West Virginia has. In 1965, its Legislature abolished the death penalty. In 1983, a West Virginia court ruled that the use by school authorities of mechanical devices such as paddles, whips and sticks to administer corporal punishment violates its state constitution.

Its percentage of public schoolchildren corporally punished dropped from 12th in 1979-80 to 14th in 1981-82, to less than the national average in 1983-84. In 1985 and 1986, Wheeling, W.Va., was judged the most crime free city in America. Other states should follow West Virginia's example.

We reap what we sow, and if we teach violent instruction, it will return to plague the instructors. Teachers and principals striking schoolchildren on a regular basis is bad public policy. Its corollaries, juvenile death row inmates, high homicide rates, large death rows and frequent executions are even more undesirable practices.

Harriet C. Frazier is an attorney and associate professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg.

School uses novel punishment

Parents go to junior high with students

By Bert Kreitlow
Staff writer

PITTSBURG — A new punishment is stalking Hillview Junior High School students.

Beginning three weeks ago, Principal Bob Guthrie started inviting parents to attend school, side-by-side all day, with a son or daughter who would otherwise be suspended.

To non-teen-agers who have forgotten the importance of being cool, it may not sound that scary. But Guthrie says the terror of embarrassment is getting results.

"The students, they hate it," he said. Some have pleaded: "Mr. Guthrie, take me out and shoot me, but don't bring my mother to school."

Some girls have thrown tearful tantrums just before entering the classroom with their mothers. One boy tried to make a run for it as he walked with the vice-principal and his mother to class.

Other students said they understand how it feels.

"I'd feel like a jerk," said Kerri Eberle, a seventh-grade student who was accompanied by her mother last week.

"I don't like it. It's very upsetting," said sixth-grade student Danita Thompson, who has not been subject to the punishment. "It's embarrassing."

Those comments make Guthrie smile. He said the main discipline methods open to schools — detention and suspension — have not been working.

Students who are punished by detention for minor offenses such as tardiness often fail to show up after school. The only alternative at that point had been suspension, Guthrie said.

The trouble was, many students welcomed the chance to avoid school for two days.

"They prefer to be suspended," Guthrie said. "In fact, they say, 'Thank you for suspending us.'"

The parents of suspended students were often not as grateful, according to Vice Principal Nathan Glasper, who has the duty of phoning the parents with the bad news. Many of his calls prompted irate tirades by parents who were angry at the school for suspending their child.

Because of this hostility and the need for an alternative to suspensions, Guthrie decided to offer parents the option of attending school for a day to erase the suspension.

"Maybe we can establish a little better rapport with the parents themselves," Guthrie said. "We've tried everything else."

Hillview is the only school in the Pittsburg district to try the new approach. Guthrie said. He got the idea from an article on a similar program in Ohio.

So far, Guthrie and Glasper are pleased with the dropping number of suspensions and the good behavior of students who are accompanied by their parents.

"We tell the parents, wear your sunglasses because the halo will be shining on your child that day," Guthrie said. Teachers at the school confirmed that even children who are normally rambunctious adopt a more obedient attitude on the day their parent is there.

"I'm all for it," said Patty Johnson, a Spanish and home economics teacher. "I think the parents need to know what it's like. I think they sometimes get a distorted view of what school is like."

Last week about eight parents attended the school, Glasper said, and some working parents were even willing to take a day off from their jobs to attend.

"Most of the parents I've spoken to really feel positive about it," he said.

"I think it's a great idea," said Irene Ray, whose son Sage is in the seventh grade.

Ray said chronically misbehaving students would be forced to "break the cycle" when their parents are nearby. She also approves of a punishment that, unlike suspension, keeps students in school.

How does her son like the idea?

"He told me he doesn't want me to do it. He'd hate it," Ray said.

Although Guthrie is willing to say the experiment has worked so far, his long experience with students has taught him to be cynical.

"Whenever we come up with an idea, the kids will come up with another way to beat the system," he said.

Staff photo/Greg Stanton

LINDA EMBERLE looks over daughter Kerri's shoulder during a history class at Hillview Junior High School

'Some have pleaded: . . . Take me out and shoot me, but don't bring my mother to school' — *Principal Bob Guthrie*

Walnut Creek, CA
(Contra Costa Co.)
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FEB 9 - 1987

Allen's P C B Inc 1888

Sacramento Bee 8/11/14

Mom who paddled paddler slapped with prison term

By Ronald Smothers
New York Times

PELL CITY, Ala. — A judge has held that it is all right for a school principal to paddle a pupil but wrong for the pupil's mother to hit the principal.

The mother, Vicki Elmore, was sentenced to at least six months in prison Thursday for assaulting a school administrator who, she said, had paddled her 7-year-old son three times despite her objections.

The sentencing in St. Clair County Court ended months of controversy in Pell City and in nearby Moody, where the case began last February.

Elmore was charged with striking Elsie McGowan, assistant principal of Moody Elementary School, with a 22-inch paddle, striking three blows that opened a bloody gash on the administrator's forehead.

The case has provoked debate over corporal punishment and the authority of the schools, and has raised in some local residents' minds the issues of class, race and changing values as a small rural town becomes a big city's suburb.

Elmore, 30 years old and the mother of three other children, told Judge Hugh Holladay on Thursday that she was sorry for what she had done, and that she had placed her children in another school. She would thus not have to confront the same official again, she said.

She also said she probably would not have struck the administrator if officials had heeded her allegations of child abuse.

But they had not, she said. She suggested the reason was that the administrator's husband was a city councilman and the Pell City police commissioner.

"Our system of justice requires that we look at the act performed," said the judge. "We have to set an example for others so that they not perform the same act you did. I sentence you to five years."

The judge said Elmore will be required to serve at least six months in the state penitentiary before she can seek probation.

Elmore is free on bail pending an appeal.

Moody, less than 20 miles east of Birmingham, is in transition from a small, rural outpost to a growing suburb of the state's largest city, said Assistant District Attorney Lamar Williamson, who prosecuted. Often, he said, there is a clash of attitudes between the "good country people who were here before and the middle-class city people who are moving in."

In the minds of many here, Elmore is one of the "country people." She was born in Moody and lives outside of town on a lonely, desolate road. McGowan is black and Elmore is white.

"This is the South, and a lot of us have come a long way, but some of us haven't," said Billie Todd, a resident of the town for 16 years who came from Birmingham. "She wasn't going to let a black woman paddle her little boy. I don't think she saw Mrs. McGowan as a person. The sentence was justified."

Todd, who is white, said she and others in Moody who know McGowan could never believe she would abuse a child and that she found paddling one of the more distasteful parts of her job.

James Lawley, principal of Moody Elementary School, said many people were skeptical about Elmore's contention that paddling amounted to child abuse.

"That same day, a white teacher paddled her daughter in another class and she didn't do anything," he said.

Federal surveys have indicated that more than 3 million paddlings or spankings are given to schoolchildren each year in those 41 states in which such punishment is legal.

Opponents of the practice maintain that it harms children psychologically, easily masks real and serious physical abuse, often falls disproportionately on minority students and often begets its own kind of violent reactions such as Elmore's. Just last summer, the National Education Association passed a resolution against the practice.

But the U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld its legality, and many state education groups have not heeded the NEA resolution and continue to oppose legislative attempts to end such punishment.

In conservative areas of the South, it continues to thrive, largely with parental support, to maintain order and discipline.

"If the student needs a paddling he ought to get a butt-busting," said Keith Cabaniss, a 31-year-old father of two from Huffman, Ala.

Elmore, who did not take the witness stand on her own behalf, maintained in an interview Thursday that race had nothing to do with what she did.

She was angry, she said, because she had asked school officials to call her or her husband, Roy, to perform any paddling that was needed. She said it was true that her children had been paddled earlier and that she had taken no action, but paddling her 7-year-old son William "seemed too severe."

"This is not a black vs. white thing, but the powerful vs. the powerless," said Elmore. She noted that Elsie McGowan's husband, James, was elected to the City Council in Pell City three years ago and oversees the city's police force in addition to teaching at the county vocational school.

Williamson noted that no medical evidence at the trial supported the Elmores' contention that the paddling was severe and bordering on abuse.

Blacks and whites alike rallied to support McGowan.

"She (Elmore) has to pay for what she did," said Sue Ash, a parent of four children at the Moody school.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

SCHOOL RULES

Many schoolmasters employed the practice of posting in the school room a list of rules and penalties for the government of their pupils. Charles L. Coon in *North Carolina Schools and Academies*[14] quotes such a list in use in a school located in Stokes County of that state in 1848. The spelling is that of the original.

NO.	RULES OF SCHOOL	LASHES
1.	Boys & Girls Playing Together	4
2.	Quarreling	4
3.	Fighting	5
4.	Fighting at School	5
5.	Quarreling at School	3
6.	Gambling or Beting at School	4
7.	Playing at Cards at School	10
8.	Climbing for Every foot Over three feet up a tree	1
9.	Telling Lyes	7
10.	Telling Tales Out of School	8
11.	Nick Naming Each Other	4
12	Giving Each Other Ill Names	3
13.	Fighting Each Other In Time of Books	2
14.	Swearing at School	8
15.	Blackgarding Each Other	6
16.	For Misbehaving to Girls	10
17.	For Leaving School without Leave of the Teacher	4
18.	Going Home with Each Other without Leave of the Teacher	4
19.	For Drinking Spirituous Liquors at School	8
20	Making Swings and Swinging on Them	7
21.	For Misbehaving when a Stranger is in the House	6
22.	For Wearing Long Finger Nailes	2
23.	For Not Making a Bow when a Stranger Comes in or goes out	3
24.	Misbehaving to Persons on the Road	4
25.	For not Making a Bow when you Meet a Person	4
26.	For Going to Girls Play Places	3
27.	Girls Going to Boys' Play Places	2
28.	Coming to School with Dirty Face and Hands	2
29.	For Caling Each Other Liars	4
30.	For Playing Bandy	10
31.	For Bloting Your Copy Book	2
32.	For Not Making a bow when you go home and when you come away	4
33.	Wrestling at School	4
34.	Scuffling at School	4
36.	For not making Bow when Going out to go Home	2
37.	For Weting Each Other Washing at Play Time	2
38.	For not saying yes Sir and no Sir or yes marm and no marm	2
39.	For Hollowing and Hooping Going Home	3
40.	For Delaying Time Going Home or Coming to School	4
41.	For Not Making a Bow when you come in or go out	2
42.	For throwing anything harder than your trab ball	4
43.	For every word you mis in your Heart Lesson without Good Excuse	1
44.	For Troubling Each Others Writing affairs	2
45.	For not Washing at Play time when going to Books	4
46.	For going and Playing about the Mill or Creek	6
47.	For Going about the Barn or doing any mischief about the place	7

November 10, 1848 Wm. A. Chaffin